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## CLEAN WATER STATE REVOLVING LOAN FUND PROGRAM

### CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION

TO: All Interested Citizens, Government Agencies and Public Groups

In accordance with the Nebraska Clean Water State Revolving Fund environmental review process, which is based on the National Environmental Policy Act, an environmental review has been performed on the proposed agency action below:

This information reviews the environmental impact likely from a project. This project is planned to be federally funded wholly or in part through your tax dollars; therefore, you are entitled to take part in its review. If you have concerns about the environmental impact of this project, please provide them at this time. The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) encourages public input in this decision-making process.

PROJECT NAME: Emergency Sanitary Sewer Creek Crossing Replacement  
APPLICANT: Wauneta, Nebraska  
COUNTY: Chase County  
POPULATION: 577 (2010 Census)  
CWSRF PROJECT NUMBER: C317423  
NDEQ ID No.: 57864  
AWIN SUSTAINABILITY SCORE: 22  
TOTAL PROJECT AMOUNT: \$250,000  
ESTIMATED CWSRF LOAN FORGIVENESS AMOUNT: \$100,000  
ESTIMATED CWSRF LOAN AMOUNT: \$150,000

The Village of Wauneta is located in Chase County in southwestern Nebraska. The 2010 census population was 577. Wauneta's wastewater collection system includes an 8 inch sanitary sewer undercrossing of Frenchmen Creek. The gravity sewer main is currently found exposed on the Creek bottom as undercutting of the Creek bank and erosion of the stream bed has occurred. The exposed sewer is the only sewer that serves the Village north of Frenchmen Creek which has approximately 25% of the Village collection system. The sanitary sewer line is at risk of failure by stream action and/or freezing during winter months. Infiltration into the sewer main is assumed as the Village was unable to run video equipment through the sewer main due to previous damage and repair. The risk to the Village if the line breaks is the flooding of the Village's only lift station located off the south bank of Frenchmen Creek. The lift station collects and pumps wastewater from the entire Village collection system to the two cell lagoon system southeast of town. Failure of the sewer line would flood out the lift station and could make for sewer backups in town. In addition, a failure of the sewer line would discharge raw sewage to Frenchmen Creek causing an bypass of untreated wastewater to the waters of the state.

The proposed 8 inch sewer line replacement would be directionally bored under Frenchmen Creek with a protective encasement pipe and other necessary protection controls of concrete anchorage, concrete encasement, and rip rap.

The project is eligible for financing through the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund (CWSRF) and is listed on the planning list of the SFY2017 Intended Use Plan (IUP). Wauneta qualifies for a 20-year loan at a current program interest rate of 1.5 percent. In addition to principal and interest payments, an administrative fee of 1.0 percent of the outstanding principal balance would be assessed each year. Wauneta also qualifies for 50% loan forgiveness capped at \$100,000 due to their 2014 Median Household Income of \$35,000 and AWIN sustainability risk ranking of 22 considered a high risk.

Sewer use fees would be pledged to repay the loan. Current residential sewer use rates are a flat rate of \$12.00 per month. The City of Wauneta is estimated to have approximately 336 sewer connections. Sewer rates would need to be raised by \$2.78 per month to cover the debt service and 10 percent coverage requirement. This would equate to an average sewer rate of \$14.78 per month.

The project will have a positive impact on the environment by preventing a raw sewage bypass into the Frenchmen Creek. The project will result in continued wastewater transmission and treatment of sewage flows from the Village with a lowered risk of future failure of the Creek undercrossing.

The review did not indicate a significant environmental impact would result from the proposed action. The project is located inside the 100 year flood plain of the Frenchmen Creek. The project will apply for a permit to construct in the flood plain from the flood plain administrator of the Village of Wauneta. The sanitary sewer will be installed by directional boring and will not require a Section 404 COE Permit. The project will monitor for nesting and migratory birds, which could be disturbed by construction. Most migratory birds nesting in Nebraska occurs between April 1 and July 15. If construction occurs during times which may affect migratory birds, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recommends a qualified biologist conduct a field survey to determine their presence. The construction contract documents will require the contractor to satisfy the requirements of the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The project does not discriminate against any segment of the community's population nor suffers disproportionately from human health or environmental effects.

The project was reviewed for eligibility for a categorical exclusion from National Environmental Policy Act review specified in 40 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) Part 6.204. The project meets all criteria described in the above reference and the Department has determined that this project is eligible for categorical exclusion. Consequently, a preliminary decision has been made that a Finding of No Significant Impact will not be prepared. The project as proposed is solely replacement of existing facilities.

Justification for categorical exclusion includes:

- The proposed action is not known or expected to have potentially significant environmental impacts on the quality of the human environment either individually or cumulatively over time;
- The proposed action is not known or expected to significantly affect federally listed threatened or endangered species or their critical habitat;
- The proposed action is not known or expected to significantly affect national natural landmarks or any property with nationally significant historic, architectural, prehistoric archeological or cultural value, including but not limited to, property listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places;



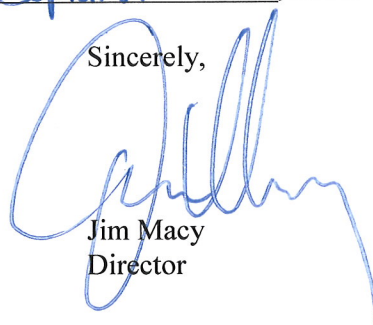
- The proposed action is not known or expected to significantly affect environmentally important natural resource areas as wetlands, prime farmland, floodplains, wild and scenic rivers, and significant fish or wildlife habitat. The existing sanitary sewer main is in the 100 year floodplain and will be flood proofed to 1 foot above the base flood elevation for the cleanout covers.
- The proposed action is not known or expected to have a significant effect on the pattern and type of land use (industrial, commercial, agricultural, recreational, residential) or growth and distribution of population including altering the character of existing residential areas, or may not be consistent with state or local government, or federally-recognized Indian tribe approved land use plans or federal land management plans.
- The proposed action is not known or expected to cause significant public controversy about a potential environmental impact of the proposed action.

The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality shall revoke the categorical exclusion and shall require a full environmental review if, subsequent to the granting of exclusion, the state determines that the proposed project no longer meets the requirements for a categorical exclusion due to changes in the proposed project; or new evidence reveals that serious local or environmental issues exist; or federal, state, local or tribal laws are being violated.

This action is taken on the basis of careful review of the application and other supporting data, which are on file in the office of the NDEQ. These are available for public review upon request. Persons having a comment on this categorical exclusion determination are encouraged to submit such comments directly to Tom Fuenning, Review Engineer, of the Technical Assistance Section of NDEQ, who can be reached at (402) 471-4989 or email: [tom.fuenning@nebraska.gov](mailto:tom.fuenning@nebraska.gov).

Signed this 15<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2016.

Sincerely,



Jim Macy  
Director

JM/tsf

Attachments:

Distribution List  
Map and Photo

CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DISTRIBUTION LIST  
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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
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STATE CONSERVATIONIST  
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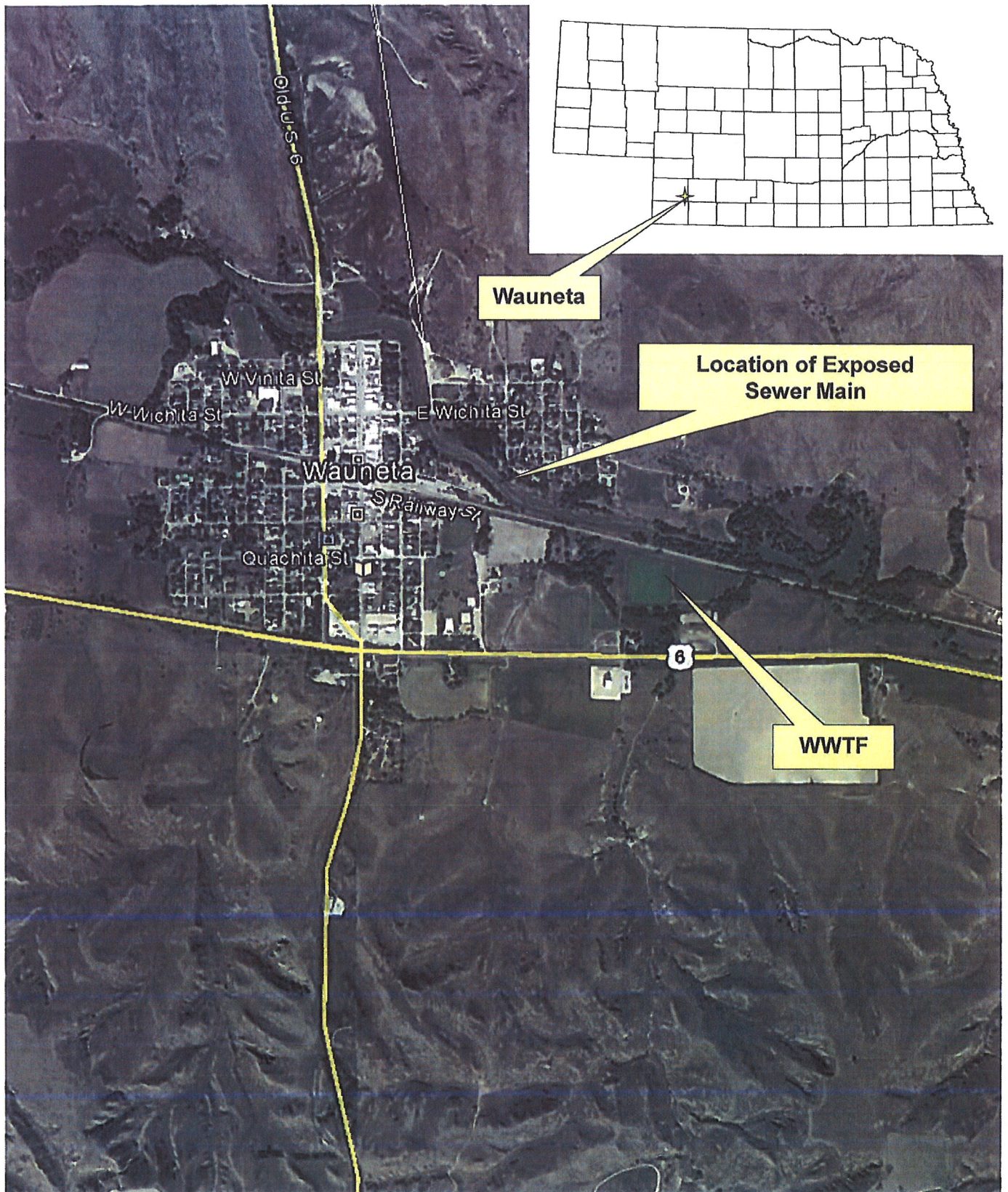
APPLICANT:  
Evelyn Skelton, Clerk  
Village of Wauneta  
PO Box 95  
Wauneta, NE 69045

CONSULTING ENGINEER:  
David Blau, P.E.  
Miller & Associates  
109 East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street  
McCook, NE 69001

LOCAL NEWSPAPER:  
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324 Tecumseh Ave.  
Wauneta, NE 69045  
(Public Information Only not for Public Notice)

NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT:  
Upper Republican NRD  
PO Box 1140  
135 West 5th Street  
Imperial, NE 69033





Prepared By:

**MA**  
**Miller & Associates**  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS, P.C.  
McCook, NE - (308) 345-3710



**Figure 1**  
**Location Map**  
Wauneta, Nebraska



**PHOTO 1**

**EXPOSED SANITARY SEWER MAIN WITHIN CREEK CHANNEL**

